



AppForDem

EDUCATIONAL APP
FOR CAREGIVERS OF
PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA



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U1. What is dementia

MODULE 1.UNDERSTANDING DEMENTIA



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Module 1

OBJECTIVES

Module 1 is aimed at teaching basic aspect for caring for people with dementia keeping in mind the importance of caring for a person as a human being rather than the disease.

At the end of this module, the student will be able to: Identify a set of basic notions of dementia,,define the most common types of dementia, Identify the meaning of the diagnosis of dementia and know different types of non-pharmacological treatment for an ethical care

MODULE 1.

UNDERSTANDING DEMENTIA



U1. Basic notions of dementia



• U2. Common types of dementia



• U3. Diagnosis of dementia



• U4. Non pharmacological treatment

LEARNING CONTENTS

M1U1



Module 1 – Unit 1 **What is dementia**



M1U1 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this unit is to teach some of the basics of dementia, taking into account that the person with dementia is first and foremost an individual.

At the end of the unit, the student will be able to recognize the difference between normal and non-normal aging, understand the main characteristics of the concept of dementia, describe the most common symptoms of dementia and recognize the person with dementia as a human being.

M1 U1. What is dementia



1. What is normal aging



2. What is dementia



3. Symptoms of dementia



4. Who is the person with dementia?

LEARNING CONTENTS

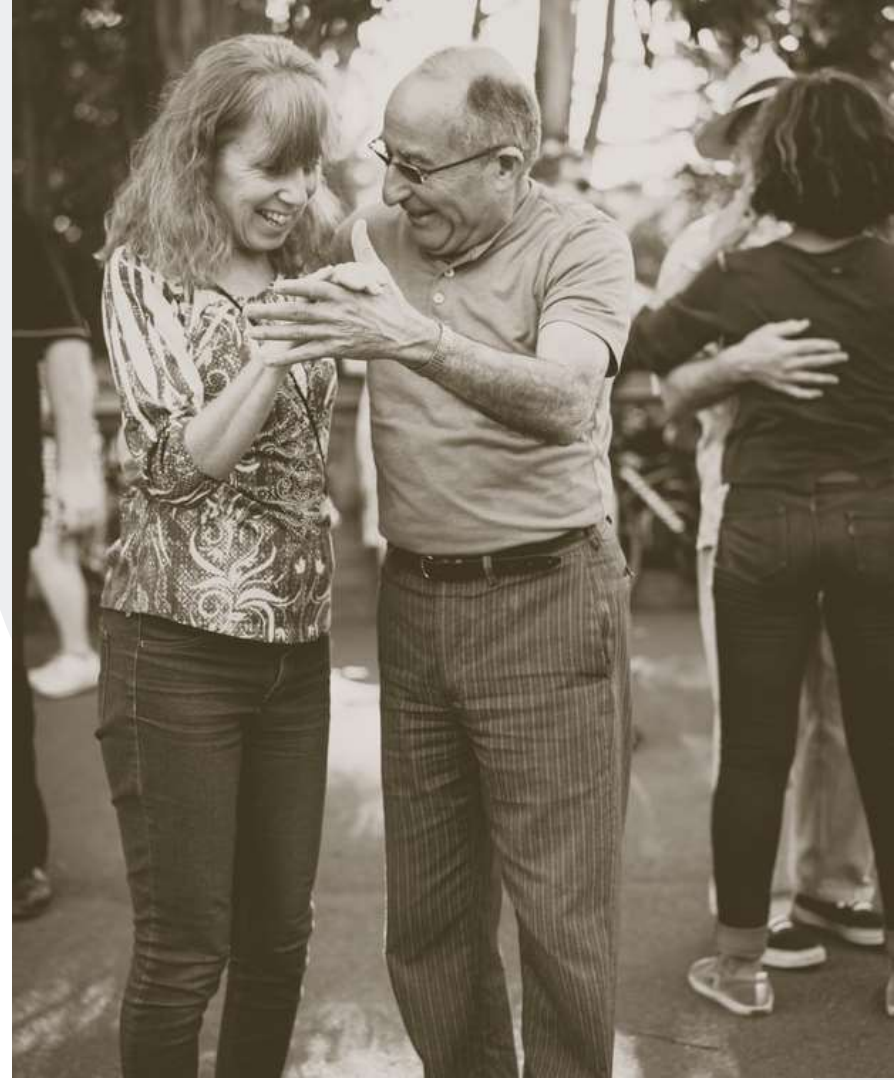
1. What is normal ageing

Aging is an integral and natural part of life, but not everyone goes through this process in the same way. Our health and functional ability influence the way we age and how we live out this process.

Both are dependent upon the genetic and environmental structure that has surrounded us throughout our lives: what we have done,

- what experiences we have had to face,
- how and where we have lived,
- etc.

See the article. The truth of normal aging.
<https://www.cdc.gov/aging/publications/features/dementia-not-normal-aging.html>



THE LOSS OF PHYSICAL RATHER THAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ABILITY

Many older people get a little more forgetful as they get older. These changes are normal, but they can be a nuisance and at times frustrating. For most people, these changes will be the result of normal ageing and won't be down to dementia.

Although there are some normal age-related changes in memory and thinking, confusion and memory loss that interfere with your daily life are not part of the normal aging process.

The main characteristic of ageing is the loss of physical rather than psychological ability.

When older people are given time, they perform nearly as well as younger people.

That is, the ability to learn and remember new information remains intact, as we get older; it just takes longer.



Photo by Vidar Nordli-Mathisen on Unsplash

CHANGES WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT

Many changes that are often considered to be the inevitable effects of ageing are in fact the result of processes, which are not part of the usual ageing process.

These changes are not unavoidable results of becoming older; they are consequences of events which are common later in life, but are not exclusive to later life.

CHANGES ARE POTENCIALLY PREVENTABLE

Many of these are preventable, treatable or, at a minimum, they can be ameliorated or their effects lessened.

Unfortunately, because of a lack of understanding about the usual effects of ageing, a lack of resources or less priority being given to the needs of older people at times, treatable aspects of an older person's presentation can remain unaddressed.



2. What is dementia

According to the definition of Dementia by the WHO (2020):

“Dementia is a syndrome –usually of a chronic or progressive nature– in which there is deterioration in cognitive function (i.e. the ability to process thought) beyond what might be expected from normal ageing.

It affects memory, thinking, orientation, comprehension, calculation, learning capacity, language, and judgement.

Consciousness is not affected. The impairment in cognitive function is commonly accompanied, and occasionally preceded, by deterioration in emotional control, social behaviour, or motivation

OMS. DEMENCIA. <https://www.who.int/es/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/dementia>



Dementia results from a variety of diseases and injuries that primarily or secondarily affect the brain, such as Alzheimer's disease or stroke”.

Dementia is **one of the major causes of disability and dependency** among older people worldwide. It can be overwhelming, not only for the people who have it, but also for their carers and families.

There is often a lack of awareness and understanding of dementia, resulting in stigmatization and barriers to diagnosis and care. The impact of dementia on carers, family and society at large can be physical, psychological, social and economic.

There is no treatment currently available to cure dementia or to alter its progressive course. There are medicines and other non-pharmacological treatments that can help with dementia symptoms, and also numerous new treatments are being investigated in various stages of clinical trials.

OMS. DEMENTIA. <https://www.who.int/es/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/dementia>



IMPACT ON FAMILIES AND CARERS

Dementia can be overwhelming for the families of affected people and for their carers.

Physical, emotional and financial pressures can cause great stress to families and carers, and support is required from the health, social, financial and legal systems.



HUMAN RIGHTS

People with dementia are frequently denied the basic rights and freedoms available to others.

In many countries, physical and chemical restraints are used extensively in care homes for older people and in acute-care settings, even when regulations are in place to uphold the rights of people to freedom and choice.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) 2006 is an international treaty, which promotes and protects the rights of the person with a disability. This would include people living with dementia.



3. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DEMENTIA

Signs and symptoms are abnormalities that can indicate a disease, injury, or abnormal physiological state.

Whereas a sign is an objective, observable phenomenon that can be identified by another person.

A symptom is a subjective experience that cannot be identified by anyone else.



For example, related to Covid-19, we consider fever as a sign and loss of taste and smell as a symptom. Signs and symptoms are not mutually exclusive.

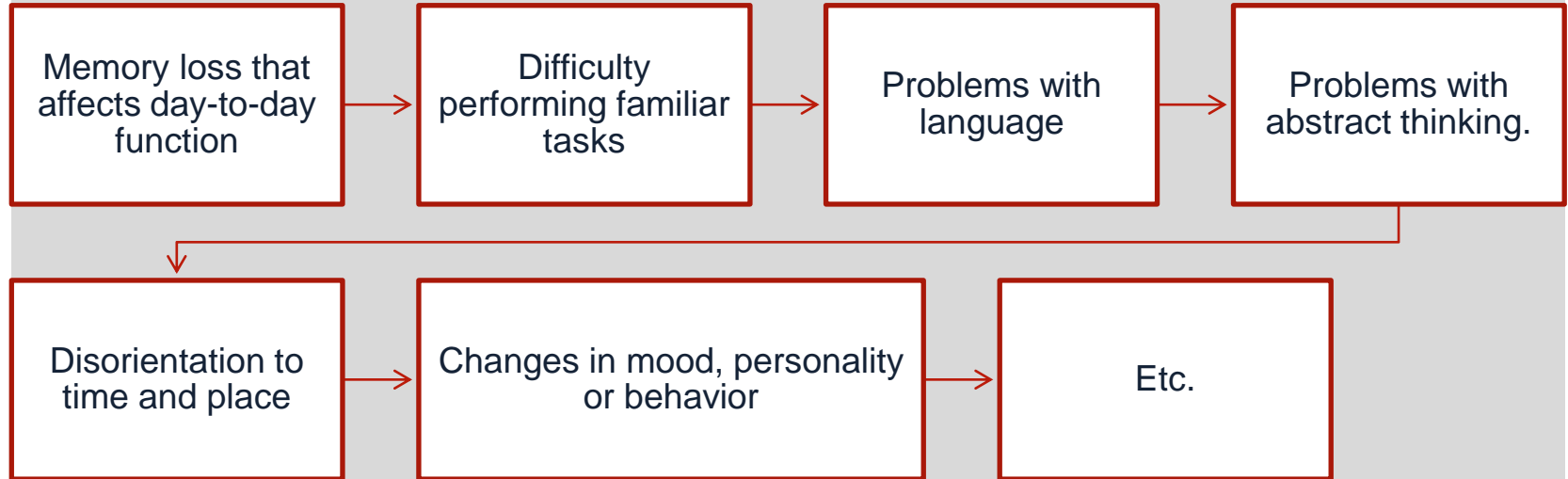
SIGNS OF DEMENTIA

Dementia affects each person in a **different way**, depending upon the impact of the disease and the person's personality before becoming ill.

In the **case of dementia due to Alzheimer's disease**, the early signs are mostly cognitive, can be very subtle, vague, and may not be immediately obvious.



Some signs are as follows:



Other signs of Alzheimer's disease can be the following:

Psychological changes signs: indifference, depression, irritability, delusions, hallucinations, etc.

Changes of behavior, may also appear, such as, aggressiveness, improper behaviour,

As well as **functional disturbance** such as: repercussion of work, on social and family life, loss of autonomy for hygiene and dressing, sleep, eating disorders, urinary incontinence.

Memory loss

One of the main symptoms of dementia is memory loss. We all forget things from time to time, but the loss of memory with dementia, particularly Alzheimer's disease, is very different.

It is persistent and progressive, not just occasional. It may affect the ability to continue to work, or carry out familiar tasks. It may mean having difficulty finding the way home. Eventually it may mean forgetting how to dress or how to bathe.

An example of normal forgetfulness is walking into the kitchen and forgetting what you went in there for, or misplacing the car keys. A person with dementia however, may lose the car keys and then forget what they are used for.



Memory loss: comparison between a person with dementia and an elderly person

DESCRIPTION	PERSON WITH DEMENTIA	OLDER PERSON
Events	May forget part or all of an event	Memory may sometimes be vague
Words or names for things or objects	Progressively forgets	Sometimes may forget; words or names are on the tip of the tongue
Written and verbal directions	Increasingly unable to follow	Able to follow
Stories on TV, in movies or books	Progressively loses ability to follow	Able to follow
Stored knowledge	Over time loses known information such as historical or political information	Although recall may be slower, information is essentially retained
Everyday skills such as dressing and cooking	Progressively loses capacity to perform tasks	Retains ability, unless physically impaired

4. WHO IS THE PERSON WITH DEMENTIA

The person with dementia **is first and foremost an individual** and many problems in dementia care arise because of failure to treat the individual in a person-centred way.

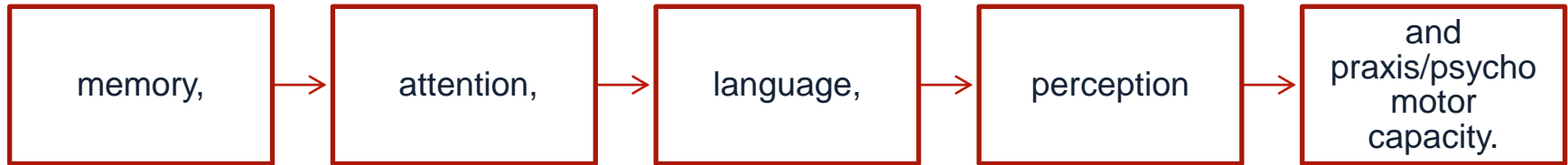
In addition, dementia involves a (usually) slow, gradual loss of multiple human capacities (memory, thinking, orientation, comprehension, calculation, learning capacity, language, and judgement, etc.), which enable us to make sufficient sense of the world or environment and to operate reasonably efficiently and safely within it.

To better understand the human behavior of a person with dementia, **we must take into account the cognitive capacity, the personality or character, and the environmental events.**



Cognitive capacity

Cognitive capacity refers to how efficiently we are able to use our brains. We tend to break it up into different domains for ease of reference but also because many domains are associated with distinct areas in the brain.



For example, memory for words will require memory and language domains to work together.

Learn more. What is cognitive capacity and how is affected? <https://bestofbilash.ualberta.ca/cognitive%20capacity.html#1>

Personality and character

In everyday terms, personality or character really encompasses who we are or what makes us a unique individual..

However, for psychological purposes it is more narrowly defined as our characteristic and generally stable way of responding, across a range of different situations.

Personality and character are formed by:

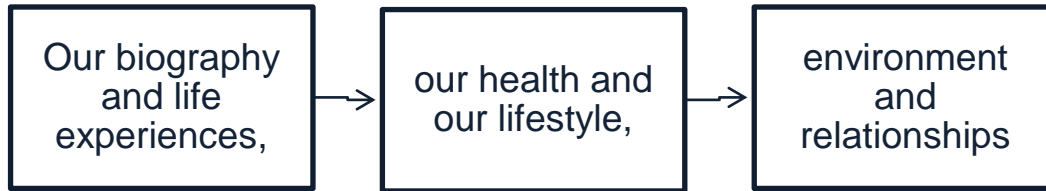


Learn more: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/mind-body/staying-sharp/looking-after-your-thinking-skills/personality-through-life//>

Environmental events

There are a number of influences, which affect the nature, and strength of the capacities that interact to make each of us a unique individual.

The most relevant influences are the following:



Learn more: What factors influence healthy aging? <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/what-do-we-know-about-healthy-aging>



Photo by [Oren Atlas](#) on [Unsplash](#)

SUMMARY

Aging is an integral and natural part of life, but not everyone goes through this process in the same way. Although there are some normal age-related changes in memory and thinking, confusion and memory loss that interfere with your daily life are not part of the normal aging process. The main feature of ageing is the loss of physical rather than psychological capacity.

Dementia is a syndrome – usually of a chronic or progressive nature – in which there is deterioration in cognitive function (i.e. the ability to process thought) beyond what might be expected from normal ageing.

Dementia results from a variety of diseases and injuries that primarily or secondarily affect the brain, such as Alzheimer's disease or stroke”.

The person with dementia is first and foremost an individual and many problems in dementia care arise because of failure to treat the individual in a person-centred way.

RESOURCES

- True and false questions
- Learning game: finding the missing Word
- Matching ideas
- YouTube videos
- Bibliography and documentation

QUESTIONNAIRE

1, Aging is an integral and natural part of life and everyone goes through this process in the same way. **False**

Answer. Many changes that are often considered to be the inevitable effects of ageing are in fact the result of processes, which are not part of the usual ageing process. Many of these are preventable, treatable or, at a minimum, they can be ameliorated or their effects lessened.

2. Which of the following is not a sign of dementia?

- Memory loss that affects day-to-day function
- Difficulty performing familiar tasks.
- Disorientation to time and place.
- Occasionally forget appointments. **True**

Answer. Many older people get a little more forgetful as they get older. These changes are normal, but they can be a nuisance and at times frustrating. For most people, these changes will be the result of normal ageing and won't be down to dementia.

3. People with dementia are frequently denied the basic rights and freedoms available to others.

True.

Answer. An appropriate and supportive legislative environment based on internationally-accepted human rights standards is required to ensure the highest quality of care for people with dementia and their carers.

4. Which of these sentences is correct:

The person with dementia is first and foremost an individual. **True**

The person with dementia is first and foremost an patient suffering chronic disease.

The person with dementia is first and foremost an old person suffering a chronic disease

Answer. The person with dementia is first and foremost an individual and many problems in dementia care arise because of failure to treat the individual in a person-centred way. To better understand the human behavior of a person with dementia, we must take into account the cognitive capacity, the personality or character, and the environmental events.

5. In order to try to understand human behavior, psychologists distinguish between cognitive capacity, Personality/character, and environmental events. True

Answer. To better understand the human behavior of a person with dementia, we must take into account the cognitive ability and personality / character, and environmental events. Cognitive capacity refers to how efficiently the people are able to use their brains. personality or character really encompasses who we are. Lastly, we consider that there are a number of influences, which affect the nature, and strength of the capacities that interact to make each of us a unique individual.

M1U1 FIND THE MISSING WORD

Write the following “missing words” on the blank line:

- person-centred, capacities, environment, Individual, treat

The person with dementia is first and foremost an **INDIVIDUAL** and many problems in dementia care arise because of failure to **TREAT** the individual in a **PERSON-CENTRED** way. In addition, dementia involves a (usually) slow, gradual loss of multiple human **CAPACITIES**, which enable us to make sufficient sense of the world or **ENVIRONMENT** and to operate reasonably efficiently and safely within it.

M1U1 MATCHING IDEAS

DESCRIPTION	PERSON WITH DEMENTIA	OLDER PERSON
Events		
Words or names for things or objects		
Written and verbal directions		
Stories on TV, in movies or books		

- Events. May forget part or all of an event **(PWD)**
- Words or names of things. Sometimes may forget; words or names are on the tip of the tongue (**OLDER PERSON**)
- Written and verbal directions. Increasingly unable to follow **(PWD)**
- Stories on TV, in movies or books. Able to follow. **OLDER PERSON**

AUDIOVISUAL

Enable Foundation - Social Design Collective. @enablefoundation· Organización no gubernamental (ONG). “Surreal is real in dementia” is an awareness campaign designed for Enable Foundation Hong Kong, an NGO creating a cultural model for better understanding of dementia symptoms. The campaign visualizes common dementia symptoms besides the most well-known symptom of memory loss. It comprises videos, animated icons, print and posters.

<https://www.facebook.com/enablefoundation/videos>

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJZLjFXA_iVAN8l-4Kr4wpKiNBpzbCPA4



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Thanks for your attention

